

Farnbacher Loles takes 3 of top 5 spots at Sebring

3.16.07 Sebring, FL

It was a wet and wild start to the GT3 Cup Challenge series as heavy rains hit Sebring just before the start of the opening round. The teams quickly switched over to rain tires and the race started 15 minutes late which cut the overall allotted time to 30 minutes. At the start, the first few cars made it safely through the first turn, but standing water on the track caused havoc as numerous mid-pack cars spun and collided on the long front straight. When the race restarted, only about 15 minutes remained.

Starting from the third spot, Bryce Miller quickly showed his prowess for racing in the rain. Bryce grabbed the lead in his Marquis Jet/Paul Miller Porsche GT3 Cup and took advantage of the clear track ahead of him to pull away. Behind him, his Farnbacher Loles teammates were all on the move. Dino Loles moved up to third halfway through the first lap while Tom Pank moved to fourth. Rookie Ray Arthur and returning racer Lance Willsey avoided the first lap carnage and drove smoothly through the challenging conditions. Arthur improved eight spots from his starting position to finish in 13th. Willsey also improved dramatically moving up 12 spots to finish in the 20th position. With the cautions and rain delay, the race had only three green flag laps of the eight total laps.

At the front after the restart, Bryce held on to first while Dino had a quick spin, opening the door for Tom to take the third spot. Dino rejoined in fifth and put the hammer down to get back the spot. Bryce battled with rookie Charles Scardinia followed by Tom and Dino. With one lap to go Tom had a dramatic but damage-free spin on the front straight, giving Dino an opening to reclaim third which he held to the checker in his Racing4Research/Recaro GT3 Cup. His third place continued his perfect record of podium finishes in the series, which started in Sebring 12 months ago. Tom recovered from his 360 degree spin to take fifth at the finish in his Baysaver GT3 Cup. In front, Bryce and Charles continued to battle and with an expected one lap to go, the rookie made a daring pass on Miller in turn 17 to take the lead but he soon spun and Bryce regained the point. A bit of confusion ensued in the official scoring as the checkered flag came out after the the two lead drivers passed. It was then announced the race was over and Bryce was listed as finishing in second, followed by Dino in third. The rain played some havoc with the timing equipment so it took a while for the results to be come official. After the podium celebration, the Farnbacher Loles drivers realized this was a good solid start to a long race season and for Bryce and Dino, the spray of the champagne was a welcome change from the rain.